



RUNCORN RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

A N N U A L R E P O R T

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for the

Year ending

31st December 1941.

BY

JAMES BENNETT

M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H., London.

Acting Medical Officer of Health.

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Dr. James Bennett, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.,

Acting Medical Superintendent Dutton Isolation Hospital—

Dr. J.W. Crowther.

Sanitary Inspectors and Meat and Food Inspectors—

Budworth Area—

Mr. G.W. Lloyd, R.S.I., M.S.I.A., Appleton.

Frodsham Area—

Mr. R. Hewitt, S.I. (Cert) B., A.R.San.I. M.S.I.A. A.R.P.S.

Matron Dutton Isolation Hospital—

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ANNUAL REPORT
of the
Acting Medical Officer of Health
for 1941.

To the Chairman and Members of the Runcorn
Rural District Council.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As Acting Medical Officer of Health for Dr. E.N. Hillman Gray now on active service, I have pleasure in submitting the Annual Report of the Public Health Department, for the year 1941.

The Ministry of Health suggest that with a view to economy in paper and printing all reports shall this year be curtailed, consequently many matters are only given in skeleton form, but particulars are filed for future use.

Much time has again been given by the Sanitary Inspectors in connection with Air Raid Precautions work and the collection of salvage, nevertheless, essential work has been well maintained and any new legislation or regulations have been given such attention as was possible. Duties connected with Infectious Diseases, Food, Water and Scavenging have not been neglected.

POPULATION.

The population as given by the Registrar General shows an increase of 340 for the year.

The birth rate and death rate are respectively 12.28 and 10.53 against 13.2 and 12.8 in 1940. The corresponding rates for England and Wales for 1941 are 14.2 and 12.9. Considering the severity of the weather in the early part of the year, when there was a great increase in sickness, the death rate can be again considered satisfactory; the principle causes of death were Heart and Circulatory diseases 114 and Cancer 51 out of a total of 349 deaths. The Infant Mortality rate is again very low, being only 39; for England and Wales it was 59. The Maternal Mortality was one death only and this was not due to puerperal sepsis.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Owing to the now compulsory notification of Whooping Cough and Measles (to meet War Emergency requirements) the total of notifications is again high. Measles totalled 455, Whooping Cough 157, Scarlet Fever only 27 against 36 last year and 94 in 1939, whilst of Diphtheria there were 31 cases against 26 last year; of the 31 cases 10 were over 20 years of age. There is a satisfactory reduction in the number of Cerebro Spinal Fever cases of which there were 4 notifications, against 15 in the previous year. Other diseases notified were: Puerperal Pyrexia 1 case, Pneumonia 539, Erysipelas 10, Food Poisoning 1, Chicken Pox 1, Ophthalmia Neonatorum 3, Dysentery 3, and Para-typhoid 4.

There were no deaths from Diphtheria, Scarlet Fever, Cerebro Spinal Fever or Whooping Cough and only one from Measles.

IMMUNISATION.

The scheme for immunisation against Diphtheria which was started in 1940, by which payment was made to private practitioners for every child immunised, was continued. To assist this scheme every school in the district was visited in the early part of 1941 and the importance of the matter was the subject of much propaganda, including talks to the children in different classes, the placing of posters in every village and the further issue of circulars to the homes of all children in the schools, recommending the parents to take their children to their own Doctor for the necessary treatment.

It became apparent, however, after well over one year's working of this scheme that there were a considerable number of children in every school in the district who had not been treated, apparently due to unwillingness on the part of the parents to go to Doctors' Surgeries.

Consequently it was considered advisable to again circularize the schools, and on the circulars was a form of consent to be signed by the parents who would be willing for their children to be immunised at a specially arranged clinic. The large response to this latter effort was rather surprising and it was very apparent that there was a demand for the holding of clinics in every parish in the district in which there was a school. As a result 579 children in 12 schools received 2 injections of Alum Precipitated Toxoid as suggested by the Ministry of Health. The same serum was still issued to private practitioners as the scheme for treatment by their own Doctor continued and 1455 in addition to the above were treated. It will be quite safe to say that at least 70% of the children aged 5 to 15 years old have been immunised up to 31st December, 1941. In several schools over 80% of the children have been immunised, but the same, unfortunately, cannot be said for the children from one to five years of age; this is regrettable as this younger quinquennial period is the most fatal period of life for Diphtheria. There are signs, however, that parents are becoming aware of this and younger children have recently been coming along in greater numbers. No child has been treated at a clinic without a signed request form from the parent.

HOUSING.

Owing to the difficulties of the property owners in getting material and labour for house repairs, it may be that the general level of house property has somewhat declined. This has increased the work of the Sanitary Inspectors as many more visits than would under other conditions have been sufficient have had to be made by them in order to maintain houses in a sanitary condition. Details of such matters as Housing, Water Supplies, Drainage, Food Inspection, Infectious Diseases etc. will be found in the appropriate special sections of this Report.

I desire to put on record my appreciation of the help given to me at all times by the late Clerk, Mr. S. Dennett, whose death we so greatly deplore, and other officials; especially the Sanitary Inspectors and the Public Health Clerk who have given willing and continued help throughout the year.

I should also like to express my deep appreciation of the invaluable help and co-operation which all the Members of the Public Health Committee and other Councillors have given me.

I am,

Yours respectfully,

JAMES BENNETT,

M.R.C.S & C. D.P.H., Lond.
Acting Medical Officer of Health.

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VITAL STATISTICS.

I have mentioned the birth and death rates in my opening remarks and for comparison the following figures are given:-

	Birth Rate.	Death Rate.	Infant Mortality Rate.
Average for last five years.	13.17	11.7	39.6
For 1941.	12.28	10.7	39

Details of Deaths - 1941.

Causes of Death.	Males.	Females.
Measles	-	1
Influenza	1	4
Tuberculosis Respiratory System	4	4
Other tuberculosis diseases	3	1
Syphilis	-	3
Cancer, malignant disease	27	24
Diabetes	1	3
Cerebral hæmorrhage	16	11
Heart disease	36	38
Other circulatory diseases	5	8
Bronchitis	8	8
Pneumonia (all forms)	11	4
Other respiratory diseases	2	2
Ulcer of stomach or Duodenum	6	1
Diarrhœa etc. (under 2 years)	2	1
Appendicitis	-	1
Other digestive diseases	2	3
Acute and chronic nephritis	10	15
Other puerperal causes	-	1
Suicide	2	1
Other violence	8	5
All other causes	24	31
Road traffic accidents	5	1
Congenital debility, premature birth etc.	5	3

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

Public Health Officers of Local Authority.

The names and qualifications are detailed at the beginning of the Report.

Facilities.

Laboratory Facilities - See Report for 1940.

Ambulance Facilities - Two well-equipped ambulances are maintained by the Local Authority. They are garaged at Dutton, in the centre of the area, whence there is easy access to all parts. One is used for infectious cases, and the other for non-infectious and accident cases.

Nursing in the Home - General - The whole of the area is served by eleven Local Nursing Associations. Each employs one trained nurse. These Associations work independently of the County and District Councils. Some of the District Nurses act also as midwives, and are supervised by the County Authority.

Infectious Diseases - No provision is made for the nursing of infectious diseases in the home.

Treatment Centres and Clinics - See Report for 1940.

Hospitals. - Dutton Isolation Hospital - 37 Beds - is under the control of the Runcorn Rural District Council, and is staffed by Dr. Crowther, Acting Medical Superintendent, Matron, Sister, Assistant Nurse, two Probationers and one Ward-maid.

For Voluntary Hospitals receiving patients from this area - See Report for 1940.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

All the items under this heading are the same as in the 1940 Report with the following exceptions:-

1. Public Cleansing - It was found necessary to discontinue collection of Ashbin Refuse from approximately 350 dwellings in some rural parishes, and to make only fortnightly collection from the remainder of Budworth District. Attention to earth closets was not affected.

2. The Knackers Yard at Grappenhall was discontinued resultant to proceedings at the Quarter Sessions.

3. There was no systematic operation of the Housing Acts during 1941, repairs, including some improvements, were obtained at dwelling houses as a result of action under the Public Health Acts.

On the following page is a tabular summary of the Sanitary Inspectors work during the year 1941:

DETAILS OF INSPECTIONS BY THE SANITARY INSPECTORS
URING THE YEAR 1941.

<u>Nature of Inspection.</u>	<u>No. of</u> <u>Inspection.</u>	<u>Informal</u> <u>notices.</u>	<u>Statutory</u> <u>notices.</u>
Houses (Housing Acts)	-	-	-
(Public Health Acts)	55	44	7
Schools	17	-	-
Camping Grounds	4	-	-
Water Supplies (Samples)	18	-	2
(other inspections)	22	11	-
Defective Roofs, Gutters.	30	23	-
Ashplaces, Earth Closets	23	-	1
Closet Conversions	6	6	-
Drains, Sanitary Fittings	112	77	-
Cesspools	22	15	-
Ditches, Brooks	43	8	-
Sewer matters	10	7	-
Re drains, connections to sewers	10	10	1
Refuse, Collection and disposal	548	42	-
Salvage	507	-	-
Streets, Yards, Passages	91	5	-
Foul accumulations	20	10	1
Re Vermin (Rats, Bugs etc.)	19	19	-
Slaughter Houses	2	-	-
Piggeries	23	-	-
Offensive trades	44	4	Prosecution
Dairy Farms	172	3	-
Milk Retailers	53	-	-
Milk Tests and Inquiries	31	7	-
Shops and Food Stores	144	4	-
Meat Inspection Visits	24	1	-
Canal Boats	20	-	-
Zymotic Inquiries	139	-	-
Visits to contacts and Schools	87	-	-
Mortuaries	52	-	-
Miscellaneous	65	40	-
War Matters (Shelters)	239	-	-
" " (other items)	42	-	-

HOUSING.

New Houses - 1941.

Only three new houses were erected in the whole area during 1941, these were for the Warrington Corporation at the Foxhill Water Works. The number of inhabited houses in the various parishes are given in previous Reports.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Samples obtained during year ended
31st December, 1941.

	<u>No. obtained.</u>	<u>Adulterated or</u> <u>not up to standard.</u>
Milk	29	7
Other Foods	22	Nil.

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

Isolation Hospital Report.

No. of patients in hospital at 1st January, 1941 - 8
Runcorn Rural - 5. Runcorn Urban - 3. - 8

No. of patients admitted during 1941 112
" " " discharged " " 102
" " " deaths 1
" " " in hospital at end of December 1941. 17

No. of	Scarlet Fever patients	admitted during 1941	36
" "	Diphtheria	" " " "	45
" "	C.S.M.	" " " "	8
" "	Erysipelas	" " " "	1
" "	Follicular Tonsillitis	" " " "	6
" "	Measles	" " " "	3
" "	Chicken Pox	" " " "	1
" "	Broncho Pneumonia	" " " "	1
" "	Paratyphoid B	" " " "	4
" "	Influenza	" " " "	2
" "	Sonne Dysentery	" " " "	3
" "	Vincent's Angina	" " " "	1
" "	Suspected C.S.M.	" " " "	1

TUBERCULOSIS.

New Cases and Mortality 1941.

Respiratory, Males 16 (deaths 5) Females 7 (deaths 2)
Non-respiratory, Males 3 (deaths 0) Females 4 (deaths 0).

Chester County Council Laboratory - Sputum examinations:-

1941 - Positive 19, Negative 60, Total 79

Statement showing number of Tuberculosis patients on the Register of the Runcorn Rural Area on the 31st December, 1941:

Year.	Pulmonary.			Non-Pulmonary.			Total all forms.
	M.	F.	Total.	M.	F.	Total.	
1941	61	42	103.	30	37	67	170.

SCHOOL CLOSURES FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASES - 1941.

Date.	School.	Cause.	Duration.
27th January.	Moore Council School.	Measles	14 days.
3rd March.	Antrobus C.T. School.	Whooping Cough	11 days.
28th May.	Frodsham C.T. Infants	Measles and Whooping Cough	19 days.
15th July.	Norley C.T. School.	Measles	10 days.

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Acting Medical Officer of Health